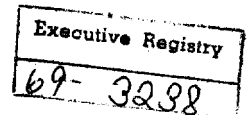


THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301



June 18, 1969

The Honorable J. W. Fulbright
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Fulbright:

I have received your invitation, as you know, to appear before the Committee on Foreign Relations at an early date. I understand the topic for discussion would be a classified intelligence briefing based on my May 22 statement on the SAFEGUARD system before the House Appropriations Committee.

In my judgment, it would be advisable for the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and me to appear together. Mr. Helms, I believe, agrees. Furthermore, the proposed joint appearance should be in closed session. The prominence which a number of unfounded rumors have gained recently causes me to feel all the more strongly that a joint appearance is very desirable.

I feel certain we can work out a date mutually acceptable to you, the Committee, Mr. Helms, and me.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Walt Rost". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

J. W. FULBRIGHT, ARK., CHAIRMAN
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JOHN J. WILLIAMS, DEL.
JACOB K. JAVITS, N.Y.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

CARL MARCY, CHIEF OF STAFF
ARTHUR M. KUHLE, CHIEF CLERK

June 16, 1969

The Honorable Melvin R. Laird
Secretary of Defense
Washington, D. C.

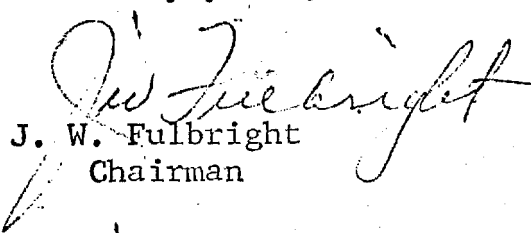
Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Committee on Foreign Relations this morning studied the statement you made on May 22, 1969, before the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives on the subject of the Safeguard Anti-ballistic Missile System. It voted to invite you to appear before the Committee on Foreign Relations in public session at your early convenience to discuss the subjects you dealt with on May 22.

I hope you will be able to appear on the morning of Tuesday, June 24th, that being the most convenient date for the Committee. However, should that day, for compelling reasons, not be possible for you, the Committee will hold its schedule open also for the mornings of June 25, 26, and 27.

I suggest that Mr. Stempler might discuss the schedule with Mr. Marcy to establish firmly a time and place for the hearing.

Sincerely yours,


J. W. Fulbright
Chairman

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UNCLASSIFIED		CONFIDENTIAL		SECRET	
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP					
TO	NAME AND ADDRESS		DATE	INITIALS	
1	The Director			<i>mt</i>	
2	Mr. Maury			<i>gm</i>	
3					
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ACTION		DIRECT REPLY		PREPARE REPLY	
APPROVAL		DISPATCH		RECOMMENDATION	
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DATE 18 JUN 64

U.S. Intelligence Doubts Soviet First-Strike Goal

By PETER GROSE

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 17 — The United States intelligence community has reportedly concluded that the Soviet Union is not now striving for the capability to launch a first-strike nuclear attack against this country but is probably seeking more than parity with the United States in missile strength.

At meetings last week of the United States Intelligence Board, which is presided over by the Director of Central Intelligence, Richard Helms, and various civilian and service intelligence agencies are understood to have reached a consensus estimate of Soviet strategic strength for the next two or three years.

Sent to the White House as the official judgment of the intelligence community, the detailed and secret survey seems

bound to become embroiled in the current controversy over the opening of strategic arms talks with the Russians and the proposed deployment of an antiballistic-missile system.

The White House announced today that the National Security Council would meet tomorrow on arms policies. President Nixon is expected to disclose at a televised news conference at 7 o'clock Thursday night when and where the Administration proposes to open the new round of disarmament talks.

Meanwhile, in a related development, 39 Senators—only 12 short of a majority—joined together as co-sponsors of a resolution urging the President to seek agreement with the Soviet Union to halt testing of

multiple-warhead missiles.

The signers included the Senate Democratic leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana, and the Democratic whip, Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts. Senator Edward W. Brooke, Republican of Massachusetts, was the chief author of the resolution, which was endorsed by a total of 27 Democrats and 12 Republicans.

Critics of the Administration are fearful that Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird and Pentagon strategists have drowned out Secretary of State William P. Rogers and other potential restraining voices—including the Central Intelligence Agency—in pushing for a stern negotiation position and for costly defense programs by, in the critics' view, exaggerating Soviet nuclear capabilities.

Among Congressional opponents of the Sageguard antiballistic missile system, there is particular resentment at what they see as the Pentagon's highly selective, if not actually distorted, use of raw intelligence data to promote the pro-ABM position. The same resentment has been voiced privately by intelligence officials themselves.

It is in this context that the high-level consensus estimate of the entire intelligence community assumes special significance.

The United States Intelligence Board is a high-level coordinating group that meets weekly to correlate all the data available across the Government. Sitting on the board under Mr. Helms's chairmanship are representatives of the C.I.A.; the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency; the intelligence branches of the Army, Navy and Air Force; the State Department, the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Security Agency.

These agencies agreed last week that the Russians appear to be moving rapidly, more so than expected several years ago, to strengthen their nuclear forces as a deterrent and are probably striving for more than equality of missile strength with the United States.

Desire and Intention

But, in the board's judgment, this drive falls short of an effort to achieve a "first-strike capability"—the capability to destroy enough United States missiles in a first strike to prevent this country from launching an effective retaliatory blow.

The "desire" ultimately to acquire such a capability may be present in some Soviet policy-making circles, the board concluded, but both the capability and the specific intention to achieve it were ruled out for the foreseeable future.

This conclusion was reportedly stated in the formal "national intelligence estimate" without any dissenting footnotes from any of the participating agencies.

Pentagon strategists have repeatedly cited the threat of a Soviet first-strike capability to justify the need for the Safe-guard ABM System.

Not a Direct Contradiction

The intelligence community's estimate minimized this threat, though it is not in direct contradiction with the official Pentagon view; Mr. Laird's statements raised the possibility of a Soviet first-strike capability by the mid-1970's, a time beyond the two or three years covered in the intelligence community's estimate.

Preliminary assessments prepared by the C.I.A. and made available to Congressional committees were understood to

have come down far harder in rebutting Mr. Laird's arguments about Soviet capabilities.

According to reliable sources, Mr. Helms, aware of the political controversy surrounding the estimates, softened some of the language of the final survey—without altering the basic conclusions—to avert an unnecessary confrontation between the C.I.A. and the Pentagon.

The bureaucratic ordeal of achieving a consensus position among various Government agencies has stirred Congressional interest in the reliability of top-level intelligence and the means by which raw data are analyzed.

In policy controversies, particularly on strategic arms questions, individual agencies' tentative or preliminary assessments are portrayed as the latest authoritative intelligence as they are passed around among participants in the debate.

The purpose of the United States Intelligence Board is to provide a high-level forum for the entire intelligence community to meet and try to achieve a nonpartisan consensus for the President.

Mr. Helms acts as the spokesman for the community and the C.I.A. in policy-making councils. Pentagon and State Department intelligence assessments can also be called to the President's attention independently by Mr. Laird, by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, and by Mr. Rogers.

Continued on Page 10, Column 1

Hill Intelligence Report Disputes Administration on Red ABM Peril

By David Kraslow
Los Angeles Times

An unpublished Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff document reveals a basic disagreement within the Government over whether the Soviet Union is going for a firststrike nuclear attack capability in its missile program.

This question is central to the issue of whether the United States should build an anti-ballistic missile system.

The document discloses that the United States Intelligence Board comprised of the top national security agencies, has never made a finding that the Soviet SS-9 intercontinental ballistic missile was deployed in order to develop a first-strike capability.

In Senate testimony on March 21, Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird said that the Soviets "are going for a first strike capability. They're going for our missiles and there's no doubt about that."

In addition to the statement on the intelligence board's assessment, the staff document makes other "assertions" concerning the Soviet missile program and related matters.

A copy of the document, based for the most part on information given the committee by Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms on Soviet missile de-

ployment and capabilities, has been obtained by The Times. Helms is chairman of the intelligence board as well.

The committee decided at a closed meeting yesterday against releasing the document. It voted instead to invite Laird to come before the committee to try to explain the differences between what Laird and other officials have been saying.

The document obviously was intended as a counter to the Nixon Administration's campaign to win support for its Safeguard ABM plan in the Senate, where the division on the issue is close. A bi-partisan majority of the 15-man Foreign Relations Committee is believed to be strongly opposed to deployment of an ABM system.

The document suggests distortion of secret intelligence data by unnamed Administration officials to gain public support for Safeguard.

"The intelligence information received by the committee does not accord in many important respects with the intelligence cited by certain officials of the Executive Branch and referred to in certain press reports," the document says.

"Because of the important part intelligence information has come to play in the debate on the proposed deployment of

the Safeguard ABM system, and because the committee believes that the intelligence information made public has often been erroneous and thus has inadvertently created false impressions both within the Government and among the public generally, the committee believes it has a responsibility to attempt to clarify certain questions of fact."

In a "fact sheet" issued on March 14 to help demonstrate the need for Safeguard, the Pentagon said that "the Soviet ICBM program has not leveled off as we had hoped. In fact, if anything, it has accelerated, and they are continuing to deploy their big missiles."

The statement might leave the impression that Soviet missile deployment has increased. Yet the staff document says:

(1) We have known about tests of the SS-9, and about deployment of the SS-9, for five years.

(2) In the past two years the rate of deployment of these missiles has decreased and not increased.

(3) The number of SS-9 launchers discovered since November, 1968, represents an increase of less than 3 percent of the total number of SS-9 launchers which we know to be deployed.